

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-15 HA-05 IO-14 /105 W

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FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1748

INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

UNCLAS CARACAS 2937

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PERP VE PO NU

1. MARIO SOARES, HEADING A 15 MEMBER DELEGATION OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL, ARRIVED IN CARACAS MARCH 22 FOR A FOUR -DAY VISIT ON THE LAST LEG OF A LATIN AMERICAN TOUR. SOARES IN HIS POSITION AS VICE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL RATHER THAN AS PRIME MINISTER, WAS INVITED BY THE ACCION DEMOCRATICA (AD) PARTY OF VENEZUELA. DURING HIS STAY, SOARES, MET WITH PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ, EX-PRESIDENT ROMULO BETANCOURT, AS WELL AS GONZALO BARRIOS, PRESIDENT OF THE CONGRESS, AND OTHER AD PARTY LEADERS.

2. IN PRESS REMARKS, SOARES STATED THAT LATIN AMERICA WAS MOVING TOWARD DEMOCRACY IN THE WAKE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. HE ALSO CONDEMNED THE SOMOZA REGIME IN NICARAGUA AND EXPRESSED DEEP CONCERN OVER HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ARGENTINA AND URUGUAY.

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ON THE ISSUE OF PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE, SOARES SAID THAT HIS GROUP RECEIVED PERIODIC REPORTS FROM THE PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY BUT THAT NO SPECIFIC POSITION HAS BEEN TAKEN ON THE ISSUE. FINALLY, HE ANNOUNCED THAT THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL WOULD ESTABLISH A PERMANENT COMMISSION TO STUDY THE PROBLEMS OF LATIN AMERICA.

3. COMMENT: IN VENEZUELA, SOARES IS REGARDED AS A HERO, AN EXTREMELY ABLE POLITICAN WHO, THROUGH DEFT MANUEVERING, BROUGHT THE COMMUNISTS TO THEIR KNEES. AS A SOCIALIST, HE IS CONSIDERED A KISSING COUSIN BY THE AD PARTY. INDICATIVE OF THE HIGH ESTEEM IN WHICH HE IS HELD BY THE GOVERNING AD PARTY, SOARES DID MOST OF HIS TRAVELING IN THE CARIBBEAN ABOARD PRESIDENT PEREZ' PRESIDENTIAL BOEING 737. VENEZUELAN PRESS COVERAGE OF SOARES' VISIT WAS INTENSE AND SENIOR ACCION DEMOCRATICA PARTY MEMBERS VIED WITH EACH OTHER IN HAVING SOME PERSONAL CONTACT WITH SOARES. POLCOUNS SPOKE TO SOARES AT PORTUGUESE EMBASSY RECEPTION WHERE HE ECHOED MOST OF WHAT IS MENTIONED IN PARA TWO ABOVE WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE IMPACT OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. HE ALSO STATED THERE WILL BE ANOTHER MEETING OF THE SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL IN MAY IN SENEGAL FOLLOWED BY A LATER MEETING OF THE SAME GROUP THIS FALL IN VANCOUVER, CANADA. END COMMENT.
VAKY

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